

Transportation *Digest*

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Rhode Island Department of Transportation Newsletter



DEMOLITION IS UNDERWAY at One Allens Ave., a huge building once occupied by many businesses. The building occupied most of the block between the Providence Hurricane

Barrier (see gates in foreground) and the intersection of Eddy St. and Allens Ave. in Providence. The Rhode Island headquarters for Fleet Bank can be seen in the background.

FHWA pilot program provided additional relocation funds for businesses

By Rick Kalunian

RIDOT's Real Estate section faced a huge challenge with the Right of Way effort necessary for the relocation of I-195 in Providence. Fifty-eight parcels have already been acquired, three transactions are in process, and eight partial acquisitions are scheduled to be completed this year.

Sixty-nine businesses have moved from properties that were acquired for the project. Seven more will move soon. Two businesses have vacated but still need replacement sites and a few others have not decided on a new location.

Relocation assistance

RIDOT follows regulations established by Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act enacted in 1970 for all projects that involve federal funding. The regulations define benefits for individuals, families and businesses displaced, and were last revised in 1989.

For businesses, the benefits include payment of all moving expenses and reestablishment costs (including site modification). Reestablishment expenses are capped at \$10,000. RIDOT Real Estate staff knew this would not be enough to minimize adverse impacts to the businesses impacted by the relocation of I-195 and enable them to move promptly.

Boston Conference leads to pilot program

Facing this dilemma, Ann Hollands, RIDOT's Administrator for Real Estate, and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Realty Officer attended a Boston conference. They heard federal
(See Real Estate, page 2)

TIP process begins with agency outreach

RIDOT again joined with the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) and the Statewide Planning Program to host community outreach meetings as the first step in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process. The TIP is a multi-year program approved by the State Planning Council that directs Rhode Island's federal and state transportation infrastructure investments.

In January, four such meetings were held throughout the state to give the public an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the state's transportation system. The meetings, held in Kingston, Portsmouth, Smithfield, and Providence, also provided an opportunity for the agencies to gain valuable feedback for their transportation planning efforts.

Feedback focused on the following topics: the condition and

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Washington Bridge bike path addresses budget, history

Last April, I announced that due to the concrete conditions, traffic volumes and the estimated cost of a required seismic retrofit, the Washington Bridge Eastbound would have to be replaced. At that time, the price tag for the project was between \$75 and \$85 million.

Since then, we've been holding meetings to weigh our options. Some of what we've been doing has involved plans to demolish the bridge. We know from experience that we'd be required by the Coast Guard to remove the bridge.

So we looked at the possibility of preserving part of the bridge rather than demolishing all of it, to accommodate a 12-foot bike path on the new bridge. This would help defray the costs of demolition, and at the same time maintain our commitment for a bike path on the bridge.

Our efforts yielded five alternatives for a new five lane Washington Bridge. We studied the assets and liabilities of each of the alternatives based on the actual construction cost to build the new



**William D. Ankner, Ph.D.,
RIDOT Director**

bridge, the cost of the bikeway, the cost to demolish the existing bridge, and the total cost of the project.

We chose Alternative #2, the least expensive of the five. It allows us to maintain a portion of the existing bridge as a bike path, translating into cost savings since we would not have to demolish all of the bridge.

This unique and innovative process will produce a linear park with a bike path and pedestrian crossing.

Rendering of the proposed new Washington Bridge with its bike path and pedestrian walkway.

The linear park, which will also serve as a comfortable and scenic gathering area, will house benches and planters made from granite recycled from the existing bridge.

Decorative lighting, landscaping and bike racks to accommodate cyclists will also enhance the project. The pedestrian walkway will be placed on the water side, and the bikeway will be built at a slightly higher grade to also allow for a view of the water.

Historically speaking, the project will preserve one of the bridge's major assets, the existing operator's house. We will rehabilitate the house's exterior while adding information to reflect its value and to enable visitors to learn more about its history.

We're still in design with this project. Next fall, we expect to go

out to bid for the new Washington Bridge, with construction to begin in spring 2004. Construction will last three to four years. Our goal is to open the new Washington Bridge eastbound before the I-195 Relocation project opens this section to traffic.

We're also looking at using existing state property to continue the bike path on either side of the Washington Bridge. In Providence, the path would provide direct access into India Point Park, and in East Providence, we hope to bring the path into the proposed waterfront development area. Both projects are in the conceptual stage, but it is our hope to bring them to fruition.

We're really excited about this project, as we look forward to the continued support of the General Assembly, the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission, the cities of Providence and East Providence, and the general motoring public.

Real Estate

(Continued from page 1)

officials talk about a monumental task they were beginning, collecting data on the effectiveness of the federal regulations for future consideration by Congress.

"Wouldn't it be great if we had a project in a metropolitan area with a diverse group of businesses that we could use in a study to see what would happen if some benefits were increased?" one official asked. "Would more businesses be able to relocate and stay in business if states could reimburse them for additional expenses incurred in relocating their business?"

Hollands recognized the opportunity, and offered to use the businesses being asked to move for the Relocation of I-195 in a pilot program to determine just that.

After several meetings with federal FHWA officials, pilot program regulations were drafted which allowed displaced businesses to receive up to an additional \$75,000 for modifications to a replacement site, estimated increased operating costs at a new location, or toward the purchase of replacement property for tenants or owners. Ninety percent of the relocation costs are paid with federal funds.

The program was a success in assisting most businesses in relocating. The cost of renting space in the downtown area was substantially more than what many businesses had been paying, due to leases in effect, but they were able to find space in the Providence market. Those with adult entertainment licenses have been more difficult to relocate. Due to municipal zoning requirements, they have had trouble finding legally conforming buildings.

Consultants working for FHWA have been monitoring the project and interviewing businesses to prepare a comprehensive report. The information will be part of a presentation to Congress when it considers updating the federal regulations.



DISCUSSION: RIDOT Chief Design Engineer Edmund Parker chats with RIPTA Principal Planner Rachel Ede during the final TIP meeting in Providence on January 24.

TIP Meetings

(Continued from Page 1)

safety of state and community roads and bridges; pedestrian safety; seat belt safety; the bicycle and pedestrian path network; and the desire to increase usage, availability and acceptance of alternative modes of transportation such as buses and ferries.

RIDOT and RIDEM award \$405,000 in recreational trail grants

RIDOT and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) have awarded 17 projects a total of \$405,000 for recreational trail grants. The funds will go towards trail and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses.

Communities and organizations receiving the grant money include: Bristol, Coventry, Foster/Glocester (two awards), Glocester Land Trust, Groundwork Providence, Hopkinton, Jamestown Conservation Commission (two awards), Little Compton (two awards), the Norman Bird Sanctuary, Oaklawn Village, RIDOT, Smithfield, Tiverton, and Central Falls which received partial funding.

“Walking and hiking trails are an important part of Rhode Island’s outdoor recreational resources,” noted RIDEM’s Associate Director for Policy and Administration Frederick Vincent. “The state’s miles of scenic recreational trails provide Rhode Islanders and visitors alike with an opportunity to experience the beauty of our woodlands and natural areas, and also provide an alternative means of transportation.”

Authorized by the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), the Recreational Trails Program provides funds to the states to develop and maintain such trails. “Funds may be used for the construction of new trails, maintenance and restoration of existing trails, and the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to trails,” said RIDOT Director William D. Ankner, Ph.D.



WAITING TO SPEAK: Members of the community anxiously await the start of the speaking portion of the Providence TIP meeting held at the South Providence Recreation Center.

Overall, according to Director William D. Ankner, Ph.D., the desired outcome of positive community outreach was achieved. “We held these TIP meetings for several reasons,” said Ankner. “one of which was to listen to the issues, problems and concerns of the community. As we listened, we also reassured those who attended that although our resources are limited, we will do all that we can to help meet their transportation needs.”

Co-op interns pass exam

Two co-op students in the Design Section, James Primeau and James Hall, passed the fall Engineer-in-Training exam. Congratulations!



WARREN SIDEWALKS, on Main Street and in the immediate downtown business and residential area, will be rebuilt by RIDOT with a \$1 million appropriation of federal funds. Congressman Patrick Kennedy, a member of the House Appropriations Committee, signed a ceremonial check for the project on Monday, December 10 at Warren Town Hall.

Pilgrim Partnership expands Providence-Boston commuter rail service

In March 2001, RIDOT signed an agreement with the State of Massachusetts to extend commuter rail service to Providence for an additional five year period, from 2004 to 2009. The agreement also increases service by three round trips per weekday. The new service began on May 29, 2001.

- Train #800 departs Providence at 5:27 am arrives Boston at 6:40 am
- Train #805 departs Boston at 8:30 am arrives Providence at 9:30 am
- Train #812 departs Providence at 9:44 am arrives Boston at 10:53 am
- Train #807 departs Boston at 10:25 am arrives Providence at 11:28 am
- Train #814 departs Providence at 11:40 am arrives Boston at 12:42 pm
- Train #835 departs Boston at 6:50 pm arrives Providence at 7:57 pm
- Train #836 departs Providence at 8:10 pm arrives Boston at 8:45 pm



ARRIVING IN PROVIDENCE: An MBTA commuter rail train pulls into Providence Station from under the Smith Street overpass. On the right is Providence's East Side.

Pawtucket Layover Yard

In exchange for commuter rail service, RIDOT will fund 80% of the construction cost for the proposed six track overnight storage yard to be located at the Smithfield Ave. and I-95 Interchange, adjacent to the Amtrak Main Line in Pawtucket. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) has bid the project, and hopes to award this \$10 million contract in the spring.

RIDOT acquired the nine acre parcel from the Pawtucket Redevelopment Agency in 1997. Once opened, all Providence originated trains will begin their runs from the layover yard.

The yard is also being designed for expansion once commuter rail service is extended south of Providence.

In May 1998, Governors Almond and Cellucci had signed an agreement to increase service to Providence by three round trips per day for a total of eight round trips. The agreement included a commitment from the MBTA to serve Warwick Station at T.F. Green Airport once RIDOT builds a station, in addition to exploring a possible extension to Wickford Junction.

Existing total Rhode Island ridership is approximately 2600 per day. In Providence, 925 riders per day use the service. In South Attleboro, the 1144 daily Rhode Island riders make up 80% of all riders, and in Attleboro, the 538 daily Rhode Island riders made up 30% of all riders.

Scholarship Association is now accepting applications

The RIDOT Memorial Scholarship program is open to children of RIDOT employees who are pursuing higher education, in college, technical or trade school. Applicant should submit a typed, double-spaced essay indicating the school he or she will attend in the fall, current grade point average, extracurricular activities, and why he or she is the best candidate for the scholarship.

An additional condition for the award this years is that the applicant must agree to volunteer for the day at the RIDOT Memorial Scholarship Fund Golf Tournament on Monday, August 19, from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm. Each applicant who volunteers will receive an embroidered jacket, in their size as well as breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If the applicant cannot donate the time, a parent may take his or her place.

Essays, with a letter of commitment for the tournament must be submitted by May 30 in order to be eligible. Please contact Despina Metakos at 222-2694 ext. 4205 with any questions.



THE NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION Conference was held in October in California. Seen here, left to right, are George Luciano, Region 1 Administrator, NHTSA; Dr. Jeff Runge, NHTSA Administrator; and Dana Alexander Nolf, Chief Public Affairs Officer, RIDOT.

Transportation Enhancement Program Issues Call for Projects

RIDOT's Intermodal Planning Section recently completed a series of five statewide community-based workshops to assist all interested applicants with the Transportation Enhancement Program. The purpose of the workshops was to provide an overview of the program and the types of projects that are eligible for funding to cities, towns and groups.

The workshops were held in conjunction with Director Ankner's announcement on October 1, 2001 of a call for new projects.

The Transportation Enhancement Program provides for the implementation of nontraditional transportation projects. Examples include landscape and scenic beautification, historic preservation, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures or facilities. Other examples are preservation of abandoned railway corridors, environmental mitigation addressing water pollution, and establishment of transportation museums.

A presentation made by Thomas J. Queenan and Lori A. Capaldi was followed by an informational question and answer period. Carl Passarelli and David Martone assisted in scheduling the workshops, distributing the informational brochures and applications, and in individual discussions.

Those attending said they were pleased to have an opportunity to speak to staff members individually about the submission of applications and about their proposed projects.

Current RIDOT Enhancement Projects



Benefit St. Lights, Providence



**Rebecca at the Well,
Block Island**



Central Falls Landing



Hearthside Open Space, Lincoln



PRESENTATIONS: Left to right. Dick St. Sauveur, Director of the Burrillville DPW and RIPWA Vice President, RIDOT Director William D. Ankner, Ph.D., Peter Laurie III, and Gary Tedeschi, Director, Narragansett DPW and RIPWA President.

Rhode Island Public Works scholarships

At the midwinter Public Works Expo, recipients of the Rhode Island Public Works Scholarships were announced. They are Drew Bishop, son of Bernard Bishop of the South Kingstown Treatment Plant; Michael Letoile, son of Cindy Hannus of DEM; Gary Tedeschi Jr., son of Gary Tedeschi, Director of Public Works for the Town of Narragansett; and Erica Wolfe, daughter of Ray Wolfe of the Narragansett DPW.

Each student received \$500. The funds were raised during the annual golf tournament that is held the last Monday in July at the Quiddnessett Country Club.

A \$1,000 grant was awarded to Peter Laurie III. Peter is a welding instructor for the T2 Center and an Industrial Technology Instructor at the West Warwick High School. Enrollment in his classes increased so much after students attended Career Day last year that Peter did not have enough equipment to go around. This grant will be used to purchase the items Peter needs to continue preparing today's youth as tomorrow's workforce.



ROAD RECONSTRUCTION, CAMBODIA-STYLE: Barry Higgins of the Office of Civil Rights vacationed in Cambodia with his brother and some friends. They had been to other countries in the area and decided to finish with Laos, Myanmar (Burma) and Cambodia. Here no heavy equipment is used. Baskets carried small stones, which were put on the road and made level with shovels and rakes.

Don't miss this golf tournament

The final annual RIDOT Memorial Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, August 19, 2002 at Triggs Golf Course in Providence, beginning at 9 a.m. with a shotgun, and scramble format. According to Despina Metakos, "This will be the biggest and best golf tournament we have ever had!"

Registration is \$150 per person and includes an embroidered Harvard Square waterproof pullover wind jacket, as well as 'Hole in One' and 'Closest to the Pin' contests on all par threes, long drive contests, and prizes for first, second, and third place.

Every hole will feature a surprise gift. The 14th hole will include a margarita and mimosa bar along with shrimp cocktail, and, hamburgers and hot dogs will be offered at the turn. Free drinks will be provided on the course. The tournament will be followed by a huge raffle and a silent auction!

Registration is limited to the first 160 paid participants. For more information and a registration form, call Despina Metakos at 222-2694 ext. 4205.



GRUMPY OLD MAN: Almost 22, Sue Szala's cat Jacob inspects gifts under the Christmas tree. If you were a 22-year-old cat, you might be grumpy, too!



FUNNY FACE, Dana Alexander Nolfé's cat, pauses to enjoy one of his favorite activities - napping.



NANCY GETEK'S BRODY is about one year old, and came from Little Compton. He has three cat "siblings" - Harley (black, long-hair), Claude (white, short-hair with blue eyes) and Cassie (tortoise shell calico). Brody loves to chase his tennis ball or a stick or the cats!



RAMSEY, Heidi and Mike Cote's fearless water dog, pauses wondering what to do next. The problem is, since he's a terrier/retriever mix, he doesn't know whether he should retrieve rodents or tennis balls. Heidi says she prefers the latter.

The Pet Corner



WAITING FOR FRAN? Don't bet on it. Fran Segerson's English Pointer, George, spends a good deal of time at the window, checking for cats and squirrels to bark at, and Cranston fire sirens to howl with.

Family



FIRST BABY: Jack Carter of External Audit holds his granddaughter, Jenna Leigh Bears.

First Baby Born at New Hampshire hospital in 2002

Jenna Leigh Bears was born January 4, weighing 7 lbs. 5 oz., and was 19 inches long. The first baby born this year at New London Hospital in New London, New Hampshire, she joins her two-year-old brother, Jake, and is the daughter of Dr. Sean and Leigh Bears of New Hampshire. Maternal grandparents are Jack Carter of RIDOT External Audit and his wife Maureen.



P.E. POTHOLE, aka Mark Felag, is seen visiting his son Nick's class at Hugh Cole School in Warren. Felag talked about road building and materials, and left each student a bit of freshly-mixed concrete.

New hires and retirees

New hires at the Department of Transportation this winter included Michael J. Derensis, Jon D. Desmarais, Lynette L. Fletcher, Daniel P. Gannon and Dean Martin all in Highway Maintenance.

Retirees this winter included James Holmes of Policy & Planning and Steven LiButti of Construction.



NEWLYWEDS John Marchwicki and the former Kim Burden, center, were married on November 23, 2001 in East Greenwich. Honor attendants were Jo-Ann and Paul Silva, who introduced the couple. While both men work at RIDOT (John in Construction, Paul in Planning) the two women teach in side-by-side classrooms at Washington Oak Elementary School in Coventry.

Kelsall's a proud dad

John Kelsall of MIS reports that his son, Jason, attained the rank of Eagle Scout at a court of honor held on January 19. Jason is currently a freshman majoring in Aviation at Daniel Webster College in Nashua, NH.

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Blood Drive set for April 23

On Tuesday, April 23, RIDOT will sponsor its Annual Employee Blood Drive. The drive will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Rhode Island Blood Center, 405 Promenade Street, Providence.

Check the RIDOT Human Resources Web Page (take the Job Postings link from the RIDOT home page at www.dot.state.ri.us) for standard pre-donation guidelines and further information about becoming a blood donor. Cheryl Wilkes says, "We appreciate everyone's continued support and look forward to April 23. Those who register to donate will receive Administrative Leave, and all donors will be entered in our fabulous raffle drawing."



INSPECTING CONNECTIONS: Matt Picanso of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB) presented a technical overview of Internet Protocol (IP) addressable cameras and transmission of video over the internet in a January 'Lunch and Learn' at the Transportation Management Center.



New hats for Laborers



NEW HATS: Laborers International officials, center, Ronald A. Coia, Business Manager of the Rhode Island Laborers' District Council and Frank Ciccone, Business Manager of Local 808, presented caps to Director William D. Ankner, left, and Wendall Flanders, right. The new caps, featuring a patriotic American flag with 'RIDOT' embroidered on the left and 'Laborers' on the right, were distributed to the members of Local 1033 and Local 808 in RIDOT Maintenance.

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FIRST CLASS

